(No. XIX.)

THE PASTIME.

SCHENECTADY, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 1807.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For the Pastime.

[A gentleman of respectability and talents in New-York, some days since favored us with the perusal of the following original correspondence between himself and the celebrated biographer of Cowper. We view with enthusiasm every thing relating to a character high in the republic of letters as Mr. Hayley, and are proud to see his production hand in hand with that of a native American. The sympathy remarked in the conclusion of Mr. Hayley's reply is singular; and it must be flattering to the American correspondent to compare his own reflections on this subject, with those of a writer so distinguished, as the companion and intimate of the illustrious Cowper. The letter, which is the subject of the ensuing, shall be given in our next.]

New-York, Jan. 7, 1804.

Sir,

Understanding that you are about adding to your biography of Cowper, a third volume, containing letters of that amiable poet, I take the liberty to transmit to you a copy of a letter from him to a gentleman of this city, some years ago. The Task having been printed here in the year 1791, the gentleman above alluded to was so delighted with the poem, that he sent a complimentary letter to the author, accompanied with a few pamphlets of American production; and the enclosed is a copy of the answer, the original of which I had the pleasure of perusing at the time of its receipt. Dr. Cogswell, to whom it is addressed, having died some years ago, it was preserved by his widow, from whom I obtained the present copy for the particular purpose of having it inserted in a note in the New-York edition of your biography just published; but the lady residing at some distance in the country, the copy did not arrive in season. Altho' this letter of Cowper discloses no new particulars of his life, or situation, yet imagining that the sight of every newly discovered composition of this interesting character, will always prove gratifying to his friends and admirers, I therefore commit it to the disposal of *him*, who has given new *eclat* to the celebrity of the bard, by adding the lustre of comment, to the beauty of the text, and supplying the intervals of correspondence, with the most interesting narrative.

It was the lamentation of Pope, that a British author could expect no fame more extensive than the Island of Great-Britain. "A mighty foundation for our pride," he exclaims, "when the ut-

most we can hope, is but to be read in one Island, and to be thrown aside at the end of one age." He seems little to have imagined that the remote continent in the west, compared to which, his Island is but the "Taurino quantum possent circumdare tergo," was to be peopled with millions of enlightened freemen, whose native language is the language of old England, and by whom the literary productions of British genius are constantly sought for with eagerness, and read with admiration. Could he rise from his laurell'd tomb, and make a visit to America, he would discover with transport that a happier destiny had been reserved for his productions than his fancy had apprehended. Perhaps, however, the spirit of his vanity would be a little allayed, by finding that the honors of poetry were not *all* his own; that his "*Rape of the Lock*," had not borne away *all* the flowers of poetical allegory, and that an "*Essay on Criticism*," was not free from rivalry, in an "*Essay on History*."*

With a hope that the subject of this letter will prove an apology for the freedom of my address,

I remain, &c. &c.

A. B.

WILLIAM HAYLEY, Esq.

To A. B. Esq. Counsellor at Law, New-York,

Felphan, near Chichester. Sussex, June 16, 1804.

Your polite and friendly letter deserved, my dear sir, a more early reply:—I felt myself in truth much obliged to you for the kind communication of my dear Cowper's letter to Dr. Cogswell; and for the endearing benevolence with which you speak of his biographer; but an extreme pressure of literary occupation, in preparing a life of my departed friend Romney, has made me delay thanking you, till I could say, that I am on the point of using your obliging communication. The letter to Dr. Cogswell had a similar mischance in Europe, to what befel it in America; for it reached me *just after* the supplementary volume of Cowper's Letters had passed thro' the press. I am now obliged to suspend my unfinished life of the beloved painter, to discharge my duty to the poet, (not less beloved) and recast *this* life in such a manner, as to arrange the series of his admirable letters in chronological order for an octavo edition:—And now the letter, which you kindly imparted to me, will assume its proper situation.—It must be a considerable time before the octavos can appear, as much is yet to be done, before they can be printed; but whenever they are fit to circulate, I shall order a copy to be sent to you which I beg you to accept as a little memorial of my gratitude for your kindness.

* A poetical work, by Mr. Hayley.

The remark, which you make on Pope's too limited prospect of his own posthumous renown had occurred to me a few years ago, and gave rise to a sonnet (reserved with many others in manuscript) which I will transcribe, as a proof of our sympathy on this subject, after assuring you, that, with a lively and lasting sense of your too long unacknowledged favor,

I am, dear sir,
Your sincerely obliged and obedient servant.
WILLIAM HAYLEY.

SONNET.

"Read in one Island! In one age forgot"!
Such was the poet's view of bounded fame,
When pensive Pope explain'd his serious aim:
But, as the palace rises from the cot,
See fortune aggrandize his narrow spot!
See a new Britain in the West, proclaim
Thro' social regions his re-echoed name,
While boundless glory in his brilliant lot!

Earth thus expanding to befriend the bard,
Poetic genius! with a grander scope,
Spread thy bold wing! and with thy Eagle, Hope!
Bask under Heaven's illuminated cope!
Be this thy task, a task sublimely hard!
Improve the growing world; and win its just regard!

For the Pastime.

Can you not realize the truth that one day you must bid adieu to all that you love in this life? Consider, then, the situation of those whom you have attended to the grave. Yesterday they were gay, and little thought they to day would consign them to the tomb; consider the situation, of the dear mother to whom you owe your existence: she who gave you birth, now sleeps in the dust, nor can you distinguish her remains from the earth that surrounds her. No more can she sympathize with you in your sorrows, no more participate in your joys; silent as death is the voice that once cheered the social circle, and the eye that sparkled mildness and benevolence, sparkles no more.

For the Pastime.

By persons of sensibility the whispers of calumny are more dreaded than danger. Their bosoms are fitted to enjoy the pleasures of praise—for their actions, smiles and approbation are the sweetest reward. Their great object is to please; it is the

stimulus and the end of their conduct. A bosom thus moulded is too tender to bear the cutting blasts of slander, and he who possesses it, is depressed, or driven to despair by the cruel accusations of malice or envy. If any thing can support one under such persecutions it is the consciousness of integrity. The good man, when assailed by the wickedness of the world, flies to his virtues—a shield that can protect him against all its assaults. The unkindness of friends, the ingratitude of relations, and the bitter scorn of men, may occasion a momentary pang, but he soon forgets it in the uprightness of his intention. Supported by a sense of rectitude he rises above every attack, and in proportion as he is threatened by evils, gathers strength from virtue.

BIOGRAPHY.

Mr. ROBERT BLOOMFIELD.

The course of genius is original and eccentric. It has no pursuit in common with low and humble capacities, no connexion with the inferior progeny of dulness and stupidity. Like the soul, its movements are to be determined only by the magnitude of its effects. On a humble foundation it often erects the most solid and magnificent buildings, and astonishes by the wide contrast of its operations and its means. At the plough or in the work-shop it is alike bold and original; it breaks the fetters of custom, unravels the complexities of life, and exhibits its own strength wonderful and sublime.

Such genius was the prerogative of Bloomfield. Like Gifford, he has changed the work-bench for the author's desk, and substituted his own original strength of mind for the adventitious advantages of education. Of Bloomfield as a poet, correct scholars entertain various opinions; of the man, if the events narrated in the subsequent sketch be true, (and they came from a respectable source) one opinion only can be formed. The narrative of his early years is of necessity connected with the minute avocations of very humble life; but it must certainly be an object of interest and curiosity to learn the track that was pursued by a genius so original as Bloomfield. We introduce therefore to our readers the memoirs of his life.....*Emerald.*

Robert Bloomfield was born December 3, 1766; his father, Mr. George Bloomfield, was a taylor at Honington, a village between Euston and Troston, and about eight miles N. E. of Bury. Of six children, Robert was the youngest, and before his infant eyes had witnessed the four seasons of the year, his father died. Hence we hear him sing,

"Twas thus with Giles: meek, fatherless, and poor."

His mother was a school-mistress, and instructed her own children in company with others. From her maternal care

did our poet learn to read as soon almost as he could speak. Though left a widow, with so large a family, Mrs. Bloomfield, by prudent management, and a little aid from friends, was enabled to procure her orphans an education somewhat beyond the limits of a village school mistress. Robert was, accordingly, sent to Mr. Rodwell, of Ixworth, than whom no man in his sphere was more justly respected. Here he remained about three months, his principal attention being devoted to the improvement of his writing. At the end of this short period he was taken from school, and never afterwards received any farther teaching, except from his mother.

When he had attained his seventh year, his mother married again, and by a second husband, John Glover, she had another family.

At the age of eleven Robert was taken into the service of Mr. W. Austin, of Sapiston, a village adjoining to Honington; Mr. Austin had married our poet's aunt, on the mother's side; and, from a generous regard to the child, consented to take him into his house, instead of paying him eighteen pence per week, the usual salary of boys employed in the first and humble offices of a farm. Thus did "*The meek, fatherless, and poor*" little Robert become a *farmer's boy*, while his mother was relieved from every other expense, on his account, except that of providing him a few clothes; and even this, so humble were her circumstances, she found some difficulty in accomplishing. The treatment of Mr. Austin towards Robert differed in no respect from that to the other servants, and his conduct to them was exactly the same as towards his own children, of whom he had no less than fourteen; they all worked hard, and all lived well.

Here he remained about four years, when the still lowly circumstances of his mother induced her to write for assistance to two of his brothers, namely, George and Nathaniel, then in London, and in her letter she mentioned, that Robert was so small of his age that it was the opinion of his uncle Austin, he would never be likely to procure his living by hard labour.

The brothers immediately consulted upon this, and the result was, that George, the eldest, who was a shoemaker, wrote back to his mother, with a proposal to take Robert; to keep him, and teach him his own business, while Nathaniel undertook to find him in clothes. Judging this to be a good proposal, his mother accepted it, took coach, and with the tender solicitude of maternal fondness, accompanied her son to London; being, as she said, unwilling to commit her tender charge to the care of a stranger. Mr. George Bloomfield met them at the inn.

Mrs. Bloomfield was a religious woman, of the English church, and had early implanted in the minds of her children a sense of Christian duties.

Never did a son of the *Muses* enter a great city in circumstances more inauspicious than did young Bloomfield, and never was one conducted to a dwelling less adapted to inspire poetry, or to keep alive the lambent flame of youthful genius, than that wherein he was received. But he had imbibed in the pure field and rich scenery of nature, that which neither the foul atmosphere of a great city, nor the murky dwellings of its poor inhabitants could extinguish.

The lodging of his brother George, in which he was now doomed to reside, was at Mr. Simms's, No. 7, Pitcher's Court, Bell Alley, Coleman Street. "It is customary," says Mr. G. Bloomfield, in his letter to Mr. Lofft, "in such houses as are let to poor people in London, to have light garrets, fit for mechanics to work in. In the garret where we had two turn-up beds, and five of us worked, I received little Robert!" Such was the first town reception of Robert Bloomfield.

The lodgers were all single men, paying each a shilling a week. Their beds were extremely coarse and far from clean—far different from the wholesome cleanliness of the farm at Sapiston. Little Robert was here, in consequence of his youth and inexperience, the humblest of the humble. He fetched the dinner of his fellow lodgers from the cook's shop and every other errand that was wanted; for which, in return, they all assisted him in his work, and instructed him in his business; his particular branch being that of ladies' shoemaking. Every day, when the boy from the public-house came for the pots, he used to bring the newspaper of the preceding day. To read this it had formerly been the rule for each of the shop-mates to perform by turns, but now it became the daily task of Robert, his time being of the least value. This duty called forth all the learning of our little villager.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

ORIGINAL POETRY.

For the Pastime.

[The following is a posthumous production of a dear departed friend. It was preserved by one who attended him in his last illness, and cheered his dying moments, by endearing and affectionate cares. Not having undergone the finishing corrections of the author it will not bear keen and rigid scrutiny. Yet none will deny that it contains an intermixture of poetical beauties the most lofty and refined; conceptions which burn with the fine frenzy of the poet's eye, "glancing from earth to heaven from heaven to earth."]

PARADISE LOST.

A FRAGMENT.

Ah! from truth and love betray'd,
Smiles no longer Eden's shade,

The tear of Ev'n, the blush of dawn,
The breezy steep, the dewy lawn.
Now no more in dell or bow'r
Blooms the gay entwining flow'r,
Whose dew-bright foliage oft among,
Sweetly trill'd the simple song.
No more the faded jess'mines feel
O'er their quiv'ring bosoms steal,
Soft the conscious sigh of bliss,
Warm the glow of rapture's kiss ;
O'er beauty proud their shade to rear,
Water'd now by beauty's tear.
Dim is the day to guilt's dark eye,
Death thunders from the angry sky ;
Frowns o'er the deep, lies ambush'd in the vale,
Lurks 'neath each form, and sighs in ev'ry gale.
In vain the weary exiles seek repose,
And nature saddens with their mutual woes—
Goddess of the living lyre
Wake, oh ! wake thy sacred fire !
In a heav'n instructed measure
Oh ! revive the forms of pleasure !
See beneath yon willow's shade,
Hopeless weep the banish'd pair,
Damps of midnight fast invade,
Sorrow saddens to despair.
Pining still in lonely thought
Oft they sigh reproach to fate,
Doom'd to drink her bitt'rest draught,
Doom'd to feel her sternest hate.
The goddess hears !
Her lyre she rears
Entwin'd with many a blushing flow'r,
From Eden sprung,
That clustring hung
Round love's enchanted bow'r.
Now she sweeps the trembling strings,
Now of joys departed sings,
And pleasures ever new,
Blooming still in fancy's pow'r,
Boasting still the *mimic* hour,
Nor ravish'd wholly from the view.
But chief Religion mild as fair
With peaceful lip, and humble air,

Original Poetry—A Character—Inscriptions.

On sailing pinion gently press'd the plain,
Faith, love and friendship smiling in her train.
Lo the faded glooms decay
Touch'd by faith's enchanting ray;
Bright on sorrow's languid eye
Streams a passage to the sky.
Springing from the alter'd waste
Love with blushes hides the past,
With tender arts the present cheers
And veils the doubt of future years.

LODINUS.

For the Pastime.

A CHARACTER.

Old Gripus is revived again,
And close as ever, that is plain.
"Dam me, he says, "Get wealth my boy,
This is the source of real joy.
Get wealth, my lad, and if you can
Obtain it, like an honest man,
But should stale honor be a gate
'Twixt you and wealth, why pull it down—
And tho' you're laughed at by the town,
Dam me get wealth at any rate."

For the Pastime.

INSCRIPTIONS

FOUND IN AN ALBANY CHURCH YARD.

Here lies a wife beloved much,
A woman that is deserving of praise,
Her affections and industry were such
That it certainly shorten'd her days.

ANOTHER.

Here lies my wife Susan—as good a woman as ever man would wish to part with.

To READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

Subscribers will observe that another session being commenced, those who continue their patronage, become indebted for another quarterly payment.

Several favors received in the Editor's absence, are on file for publication.

Printed and published, by RYER SCHERMERHORN, corner of State and Ferry Streets, Schenectady, where communications (post paid) will be thankfully received, and duly noticed.

(No. XX.)

THE PASTIME.

SCHENECTADY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 1807.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For the Pastime.

The following is rendered from the French of the fascinating Florian. Integrity of version has been the translator's object; to this end, the graces of style have been disregarded. The volutions of Hero's mind, now elevated by expectation, and now depressed by disappointment, doubt and despair, scarcely knowing what it feels, and yet feeling every thing, are pourtrayed in the original with wonderful felicity.

It is scarcely necessary to explain, that Hero was a beautiful priestess of Venus, greatly enamoured of Leander, a youth of Abydos. The lovers were so faithful to each other, that Leander escaped by night from the vigilance of his family, and swam across the Hellespont, whilst Hero, in Sestos, directed his course by holding a burning torch on the top of a high tower. After many interviews of mutual affection and tenderness, Leander was drowned on a tempestuous night as he attempted his usual course, and Hero, in despair, threw herself from her tower, and perished in the sea. The story is told by Ovid, and Virgil refers to it in the third Georgick, "*Quid Juvenis, magnum cui versat in ossibus ignem durus Amor?*"

HERO AND LEANDER.

A LYRICAL MONOLOGUE.

The stage represents the Hellespont and the shore of Sestos. An isolated tower, with a lighted lantern on its top, is seen at the right. The waves wash the foot of the tower. Time—Night—the Moon at its full. Most profound silence reigns upon the waves and shore. Hero enters from the tower.

HERO.

Night has at last spread her shades over all nature. This, my Leander, is the hour, when impelled by love, you boldly throw yourself into the waves; and with no other guide than this lantern, which I have just lighted, your robust arms cleave the billows, and bring you into those of your beloved. (*She regards the sky and the sea, and remains for a moment rapt in thought.*) This profound calm—with what sweet enthusiasm do I consider it! How peaceful is the sea—How pure the air! even Zephyr dares not agitate it: All is silent; all is tranquil! O my friend! you ought only to listen to the Halcyon's* plaintive voice and the murmur of the waves yielding to your efforts—the generous moon lends you all her light—the billows in reflecting her, seem to wish to add to it. Ah! all nature should

* A bird called by the vulgar name of Kingfisher.